TEXTBOOK OF PEDIATRICS—Seventh Edition—Edited by Waldo E. Nelson, M.D., D.Sc., Professor of Pediatrics, Temple University School of Medicine; Medical Director of Saint Christopher's Hospital for Children. With the collaboration of 81 Contributors. W. B. Saunders Company, West Washington Square, Philadelphia 5, Pa., 1959. 1462 pages, $16.50.

In these days of intensive and large-scale research in the clinical and ancillary fields of medicine, obsolescence poses a constant threat to textbooks which have any pretensions to thorough coverage, and today adequate revisions are required every few years. While most of the writing is done by a corps of specialists, the success or failure of such a project depends on a directing head, who selects the contributors, guides their efforts, prunes their redundancies and bullies them into meeting their deadlines.

The present, seventh, edition of Nelson's Textbook of Pediatrics, a standard now for over 25 years, reflects the skill and effectiveness of its indefatigable editor, Dr. Nelson.

The reader who wishes to know whether to invest in the new edition, the first since 1954, can be assured that it has been completely rewritten and not merely patched up from the Sixth, and that a very large amount of new material has been added. There are completely new chapters on clinical appraisal of infants and children, parenteral fluid therapy, drug therapy, anesthesia, prenatal factors in diseases of children, the newborn infant, tuberculosis, rickettsial diseases, mycotic infections, the respiratory tract, the nervous system, convulsive disorders, cerebral palsy and orthopedic pediatrics; and new or radically revised sections on tropical eosinophilia, kala-azar, cirrhosis of the liver in Indian children, pulmonary ventilation, mesenchymal diseases (including systemic lupus erythematosus), behavior problems with brain damage, and the relation of the physician to the child with a handicap. There is an expansion of the discussion of inborn errors of metabolism; a brief but illuminating introduction to modern heart surgery; and, among various other changes, an ingenious and useful revision of Dr. John Anderson's chapter on poisons. Here, the poisons are first grouped into some 78 categories, which are then followed by a list of some 464 (my count) individual poisons, each of which is referred by number to the first section for a description of symptomatology and treatment. The appendix, containing lists of normal blood and cerebrospinal fluid values, sodium and potassium contents of fluid foods; mineral and caloric composition of foods; diet calculation; elimination diets; conversion tables for weights and temperatures, have been, where necessary, revised and expanded.

It is customary for a book review to contain some adverse criticism, if only to show that the reviewer has examined his victim with care. Actually, I have encountered very few serious omissions. The Wintrobe indices of red cell size and hemoglobin content and concentration are not mentioned. The danger of penicillin sensitization, to which several recent reports have alerted us, is not mentioned. The changes in cerebrospinal fluid in disease are not too well described (a really good table of these might be a promising project for the next edition: I know of no really comprehensive one in any pediatric text).

The illustrations, though not many, are good. Particularly worth mention is the colored plate in the new chapter on Mesenchymal Diseases. The index, as in previous editions, is excellent, with the main reference in bold-face.

On the whole, this is an outstanding job, placing Nelson's Pediatrics in the forefront of pediatric texts in English.

HAROLD K. FABER, M.D.

FRACTURE SURGERY—A Textbook of Common Fractures—Henry Milch, M.D., Emeritus Attending and Consulting Orthopedic Surgeon, Hospital for Joint Diseases, New York; and Robert Austin Milch, M.D., Assistant Resident Surgeon, Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston. With a chapter on anesthesia by Herbert D. Dubovsky, M.D., director of Anesthesiology, Easton Hospital, Easton, Pennsylvania. A Hoeber-Harper Book, Medical Book Department of Harper & Brothers, 49 East Thirty-third Street, New York 16, N. Y., 1959. 470 pages, with 671 illustrations, $17.50.

The senior author, who is now emeritus attending and consulting orthopedic surgeon, Hospital for Joint Diseases, New York, has been contributing to the literature of orthopedic surgery for many decades. His articles are well known to orthopedic surgeons and for the most part touch upon quite specialized subjects. The preface to this book asserts that, "This volume is particularly planned for the medical student and the surgical house officer, there at the beginning of their study of fractures, as well as the general practitioner." In spite of this statement the authors have drawn heavily on the senior author's previously published articles on specialized orthopedic subjects. For example, in the chapter on fractures of the leg four pages are used to describe an operation the senior author once published on the rare "Non union of the tibia with segmental defect." It seems unlikely that medical students, house officers or general practitioners need or desire this type of highly specialized information. Furthermore, it is difficult to understand the criteria by which subject matter was selected for inclusion in or exclusion from the book. For example, epiphyseal separation of the lower end of the humerus, a condition so rare that it might be called an orthopedic curiosity, is discussed along with such other rarities as fractures of the acromion and avulsion fractures of the glenoid while the commonly occurring and very important acromio clavicular separations are not mentioned nor is the subject of fusion for unstable fracture dislocations of the cervical spine.

The book contains many statements with which most orthopedic surgeons would disagree. Two examples will be cited. In speaking of forearm bone fractures in growing children, "In general operation should be avoided provided that *end to end apposition* can be attained. . . ." It is now well known that end to end apposition is not at all necessary for perfect healing and is never an indication for open reduction. On the subject of fracture dislocations of the ankle (both malleoli broken above superior surface of the astragalus), "when reduction has been achieved a short leg cast should be applied and left in place for at least six weeks. . . ." It is impossible to maintain stable reduction with a short cast which may very well rotate on the leg carrying foot and malleoli along with it. Furthermore *safe solid union* of the malleoli takes much longer than six weeks.

In their endeavor to cover all methods of treatment the authors at times leave one in doubt as to just which method they have found most useful. It is difficult to get a strong recommendation on just how they actually proceed in a given case.

It is refreshing and modernistic to find the subjects of artery, nerve and tendon suture concisely and neatly covered in a book on fracture surgery. How apropos! For who sees more of these injuries than he who treats fractures? The chapters on axial malalignments and slipped femoral epiphysis are very good indeed and recommended reading for orthopedic residents.